

first and third segments are of equal length in *assimilis*, the latter usually appears the longer, but less obviously so than in *atorrufus*. Of the remaining key-characters he gives, the best seem to be those of the elytral striae, which are clear on comparison (in *atorrufus* more finely punctate and much less evanescent apically).

Fowler (1887: 129-130), besides giving these latter differences, states that the third elytral interval is plainly wider than the second in *assimilis*, but not in *excavatus* (i.e. *atorrufus*). The other works I have at hand do not mention this character, but in fact it would appear from my very limited material to be an excellent one, definite and not dependent on comparison of the two species. I would add another which I believe will prove satisfactory, concerning the basal pronotal foveae: in *assimilis* the whole fovea is evenly and rather strongly punctate, whereas in *atorrufus* its outer part is almost impunctate and smooth, with the external ridge or keel better developed and more distinctly set off.

To sum up: in practice it will probably be found sufficient to use, conjointly, the characters of the antennae, pronotal foveae, and elytral striae to effect reliable determination with the minimum of trouble.

References

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Plodia interpunctella Hübner, the Indian meal moth (Lep.: Pyralidae) in Bedfordshire.

On a recent visit to one of our local pet stores, I noticed a great many pyralid moths flying around aquarium lights and resting on the shop's inner walls. Several were caught (much to the amusement of the other customers and the proprietor) and taken home for identification. Reference to Goater, B. (*British Pyralid Moths*, Harley, Colchester, 1986) revealed them to be *P. interpunctella*. With the permission of the shop's owner, I subsequently examined a tub of rabbit food and found it to be infested with lepidopterous larvae. A handful of the cereal and grain mixture was removed and a steady stream of adult *P. interpunctella* have since emerged. The business in question is primarily a tropical fish supplier and the temperature and humidity in the shop are kept very high by the large number of heated fish tanks. Perhaps as a consequence of this, *P. interpunctella* appears to be continuously brooded therein.— ADRIAN M. RILEY, 35 Park Mount, Harpenden, Herts AL5 3AS.